

SPY  
BY JAMES VICINI  
WASHINGTON

A former Central Intelligence Agency employee was arrested today for providing Communist Czechoslovakia with U.S. national security secrets and the names of CIA agents, the Federal Bureau of Investigation said.

According to former CIA director Stansfield Turner, the arrest of 50-year old Czechoslovakian-born Karl Koecher marked the first time that a foreign agent had penetrated the CIA.

Rudolph Giuliani, the U.S. attorney for Manhattan, said that Koecher admitted his espionage activities when confronted by two FBI agents in New York last Friday.

Instead of being arrested on the spot, he was kept under watch and arrested only when it appeared that he and his wife, Hannah, planned to flee the country today for Switzerland.

The couple had sold their Fifth Avenue apartment and had bought tickets for Zurich.

Mrs Koecher, 40, was charged as a material witness.

Koecher was a CIA contract employee with security clearance and access to national security information from February 1973 through August 1975.

Giuliani said that although his CIA employment was brief he was able to establish contacts with people in other intelligence agencies.

According to papers filed with Federal court in New York late today, Koecher "passed to the Czechoslovak intelligence service virtually any classified or other material information, assessments and CIA personnel identification which he obtained or learned during his CIA employment." The FBI said Koecher was trained as a Czechoslovakian intelligence officer from 1963 until 1965 and then dispatched to the United States specifically to get a job at the CIA or any other U.S. intelligence agency.

The court papers, filed by the Justice Department, said Koecher in the spring of 1975 removed documents from his office and concealed them in a cigarette package before handing them over to a person working for Czechoslovak intelligence.

The CIA declined to comment on the case and declined as well to give any indication of the value of the material he allegedly passed to Czechoslovakia.

But an agency spokesman said that would probably come out at the trial.

The FBI said the arrest stemmed from an extensive investigation which is continuing.

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